

What is claimed is:

1. 1. A device for use in an interactive cable television system, the device comprising:
 3. a hardware peripheral device coupled to a computer modem at a user premises and in communication with a computer network, for communicating data from a user via the computer network to a cable television network head end to control a television information signal provided over a cable television network cable connected directly to a digital cable ready television at the user premises.
1. 2. A device according to claim 1, wherein the peripheral device is integrated into a single unit with the computer modem.
1. 3. A device according to claim 1, wherein the peripheral device is a separate unit from the computer modem and connected to an input port on the computer modem.
1. 4. A device according to claim 1, wherein the peripheral device uses an infrared (IF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and controlling the television information signal.
1. 5. A device according to claim 1, wherein the peripheral device uses a radio frequency (RF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and controlling the television information signal.
1. 6. A device according to claim 1, further comprising:
 2. a status indicator section showing a current status of the peripheral device.

1 7. A method for cable television system communication, the method comprising:
2 controlling a television information signal provided by a cable television
3 network cable connected directly to a digital cable ready television at a
4 user premises based on data communicated by a user to a peripheral
5 device coupled to a computer modem at the user premises and in
6 communication with a computer network, via the computer network to
7 a cable television network head end.

1 8. A method according to claim 7, wherein the peripheral device is integrated
2 into a single unit with the computer modem.

1 9. A method according to claim 7, wherein the peripheral device is a separate
2 unit from the computer modem and connected to an input port on the computer
3 modem.

1 10. A method according to claim 7, further comprising:
2 controlling the television information signal using an infrared (IF) link
3 from the peripheral device.

1 11. A method according to claim 7, further comprising:
2 controlling the television information signal using a radio frequency (RF)
3 link from the peripheral device.

1 12. A method according to claim 7, further comprising:
2 showing a current status of the peripheral device on a status indicator.

1 13. An interactive cable television system comprising:
2 a computer network;

3 a computer modem at a user premises in communication with the computer
4 network;
5 a cable television network including a head end for providing a television
6 information signal over a cable television network cable directly to a
7 digital cable ready television at the user premises, the television having
8 a display responsive to the television information signal;
9 a hardware peripheral device coupled to the modem for communicating data
10 from a user via the computer network to the head end to control the
11 television information signal.

1 **14.** A system according to claim 13, wherein the peripheral device is integrated
2 into a single unit with the computer modem.

1 **15.** A system according to claim 13, wherein the peripheral device is a separate
2 unit from the computer modem and connected to an input port on the computer
3 modem.

1 **16.** A system according to claim 13, wherein the peripheral device uses an infrared
2 (IF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and controlling the
3 television information signal.

1 **17.** A system according to claim 13, wherein the peripheral device uses a radio
2 frequency (RF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and
3 controlling the television information signal.

1 **18.** A system according to claim 13, further comprising:
2 a status indicator section showing a current status of the peripheral device.

1 **19.** A device for use in an interactive cable television system, the device

2 comprising:

3 a hardware peripheral device having:

4 i. a receiver for receiving data from a user input device,
5 ii. a processor responsive to the data for sending communications
6 through a computer modem at a user premises over a computer
7 network to a cable television network head end, and
8 iii. an output for controlling a television information signal:

9 (a) provided by a cable television network cable connected
10 directly to a digital cable ready television at the user premises,
11 (b) from the head end responsive to the communications from
12 the hardware peripheral device.

1 20. A device according to claim 19, wherein the peripheral device is integrated
2 into a single unit with the computer modem.

1 21. A device according to claim 19, wherein the peripheral device is a separate
2 unit from the computer modem and connected to an input port on the computer
3 modem.

1 22. A device according to claim 19, wherein the peripheral device uses an infrared
2 (IF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and controlling the
3 television.

1 23. A device according to claim 19, wherein the peripheral device uses a radio
2 frequency (RF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and
3 controlling the television.

1 24. A device according to claim 19, further comprising:

2 a status indicator section showing a current status of the peripheral device.

- 1 25. An interactive cable television system comprising:
 - 2 a computer modem at a user premises and in communication with a
 - 3 computer network;
 - 4 a user input device;
 - 5 a hardware peripheral device having:
 - 6 i. a receiver for receiving data from the user input device, and
 - 7 ii. a processor responsive to the data for sending communications
 - 8 through the computer modem to a cable head end; and
 - 9 a digital cable ready television at the user premises and directly connected
 - 10 to a cable television network cable for displaying a television information signal
 - 11 provided over the cable from the head end controlled by the communications
 - 12 from the hardware peripheral device.
- 1 26. A system according to claim 25, wherein the peripheral device is integrated
2 into a single unit with the computer modem.
- 1 27. A system according to claim 25, wherein the peripheral device is a separate
2 unit from the computer modem and connected to an input port on the computer
3 modem.
- 1 28. A system according to claim 25, wherein the peripheral device uses an infrared
2 (IF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and controlling the
3 television information signal.
- 1 29. A system according to claim 25, wherein the peripheral device uses a radio
2 frequency (RF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and
3 controlling the television information signal.

- 1 30. A system according to claim 25, further comprising:
- 2 a status indicator section showing a current status of the peripheral device.